

REMARKS

Initially, in the Office Action dated January 6, 2005, the Examiner rejects claims 1-3, 5 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,779,031 (Picher-Dempsey). The Examiner indicates that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By the present response, Applicants have canceled claims 1 and 3-6 without disclaimer. Further, Applicants have submitted new claims 7 and 8 for consideration by the Examiner and respectfully submit that these claims do not contain any prohibited new matter. Claims 7 and 8 remain pending in the present application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for indicating that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejections

Claims 1-3, 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Picher-Dempsey. Applicants have canceled these claims, therefore, rendering these rejections moot.

New Claims

Applicants have submitted new claims 7 and 8 for consideration by the Examiner. Claim 7 corresponds to claim 4, deemed allowable by the Examiner, rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, Applicants

submit that claim 7 is allowable. Moreover, claim 8 is dependent on independent claim 7 and, therefore, is allowable at least for the same reasons as claim 7.

In view of the present amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that claims 7 and 8 are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, or credit any overpayment of fees, to the deposit account of Mattingly, Stanger, Malur & Brundidge, P.C., Deposit Account No. 50-1417 (referencing attorney docket no. 503.39781X00).

Respectfully submitted,

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